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EDITOR R.PALME DUTT

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The Editor
'Second Phase' Strategy

Ken Gill
Engineers in the Vanguard

Bob Dixon
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Disarmament

Ireland/R. Henshaw : USSR/A. Rothstein
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LABOUR MONTHLY

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Notes of the Month

'SECOND PHASE' STRATEGY

'Farewell! A long farewell to all my greatness!
. . . my high-blown pride
At length broke under me: and now has left me,
Weary and old with service, to the mercy
Of a rude stream that must for ever hide me.'

CARDINAL WOLSEY, Shakespeare *Henry VIII.*

January 14, 1973

With a delicate sense of the appropriate the Euro-Marketeers chose Hampton Court, the ancient palace of Cardinal Wolsey, the fallen Minister whose star chamber autocracy in the days of his power trampled on parliament, and who ended his days indicted for high treason, as the fitting spot for their banquet to celebrate their triumphant success, as they imagine, in bringing the body of the still resisting and opposed British people under the axe of their super-monopoly block. The banquet was lavish. A long line of elegantly clad 'Euro-dollies', according to the press reports, handed rich gifts, including an engraved souvenir memorial plate valued at £23, to each diplomat at the top table. 'There were about 260 guests there (of whom 20 were female). There were seven wines served, including champagne—and stand-up drinks before and afterwards' (*Evening Standard*, January 3). The sounds of the world's anguish did not penetrate this merry throng. 'The bombs on Hanoi,' complained the *Economist* on December 30, 1972, 'are the worst possible fanfare for Europe.'

'Fanfare' Fiasco

All the planned expenditure of £350,000 of taxpayers' money by the Tory Government for a 'fanfare' to popularise its criminal record could not change the outlook of the British people, writhing under the blows of ferociously rising prices, frozen wages and high unemployment. Popular anger has been sharpened by the prospect of successive further rises in prices and tax burdens, charted out in an elaborate timetable over the next five years to 1977 (a prospective rise of food prices by 40 per cent, and in some cases more, during these five years) as an essential part of the strategy for entering into the bondage of the Market, paying the heavy contributions at a rate due to rise year by year, and swelling prices in Britain to the Market

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level. The BBC interviewer who sought to ask a sample of the adult population whether they felt 'happy' or 'unhappy' over entry into the Market, discovered that the largest single section, 39 per cent of those he questioned, gave the answer 'unhappy'.

Battle Joined

The translation from 'unhappy' to consequent action has already begun. The militant resistance of the organised workers against the Government's strategy of the second phase of the freeze, has already, despite the weakness of sections of the leadership, compelled the Government to begin to revise its strategy and withdraw its attempted ban on wage negotiations during this second phase. The interviews of the Government with those sections of the General Council prepared to meet jointly have revealed once again the gulf which exists, making it too hazardous even for those sections of the leadership to attempt to enter into agreement with the Tory Government. The stakes are high. The Government, concerned to draw the lesson from the defeats it had to suffer in 1972, has devised its strategy in more complex fashion for 1973. But the opening of 1973 has indicated that the victories which were won by united working class action in 1972 can be carried forward in 1973, provided the full strength of the working class is mobilised, alongside the political mobilisation of all sections of the people against the offensive of Toryism and the Market reactionaries.

Belated Frank Words

Mr Heath was tactfully out of the country on the shameful day of entry, having taken the opportunity to travel overseas in order to attend the funeral of a former Canadian Premier. But on the next day he was in full voice at the celebration banquet organised by the 'British Council of the European Movement' in Hampton Court Palace to proclaim his devotion to the cause of the minority group of nine European states, which he was pleased to call 'Europe'. Nevertheless, as sometimes happens on these ceremonial occasions, after all the main rites have been performed and completed, a discordant voice arises at the subsequent celebration banquet to cut across all the hypocritical rhetoric with some abrasive home truths. In this case the home truths cut all the more sharply because they came from no less an authority than the outgoing President of the 'Council of Europe', Dr Mansholt, who had been most assiduous to promote Britain's entry and cover up the ugly realities until the deed was done. Only then, after the event, he startled the Hampton

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Court dignitaries with a series of grim truths and display of skeletons which, in view of the authoritative position of the spokesman, have inevitably received wide publicity on all sides:

> The process of integration has led to major social stresses.
> The disparities in standards of living between different areas of the Community have become more marked rather than less.
> For the great mass of the population there has been no broad improvement in conditions generally. Dissatisfaction is widespread.

Valuable home truths to have been thus placed on record from an authoritative source. But how much more valuable it would have been, Dr Mansholt, if you had brought these home truths to the attention of the British people *before* the final—and in your belief irrevocable—decision on entry had been made.

Mr Heath's 'Europe'

Undeterred by this painful rattling of skeletons by Dr Mansholt, Mr Heath, who spoke after this damning exposure had pricked in advance the balloon of his laborious oratory, went ahead with his lengthy prepared speech (the bells of the famous Palace Clock, press reports noted, chimed the quarter three times before he had finished). He proclaimed his vision of the role of the Common Market Nine, whom he persistently referred to as 'Europe', to function, not only as an economic combination, but as a political combination, with a 'European foreign policy'. 'The building of a European foreign policy is not a luxury for the Community, but a clear necessity.' The Common Market, he emphasised, did not represent a threat to the interests of the US, but corresponded to 'the consistent policy of successive Presidents who have held that it was a fundamental interest of the United States that Europe should unite, an interest which outweighed the increased competition and the occasional disagreements with American policy which a united Europe was bound to involve.' Lest the innocent might imagine that these references to 'a united Europe' and a 'European foreign policy' were expressions of the aims of co-operation of the thirty states of Europe, the usual contradiction followed (analysed already in these Notes last month on the basis of a previous similar contradictory speech on the occasion of the Common Market 'Summit' on October 19) when in a subsequent passage he referred to the necessity of a 'common policy' in the relations of his 'Europe' with 'East Europe'. 'A common policy is equally necessary in our dealings with the Soviet Union and with East Europe.' How 'Europe' could have 'dealings' with a part

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of itself remains a jigsaw puzzle for the uninitiated, which could have been avoided if he had described his Common Market grouping as 'Western Europe' or 'Capitalist Europe' or the like. But this greater clarity would have defeated his aim to confuse the innocent into believing that his policy for organising a sectional combination of a minority of European states represented an embodiment of 'European unity'.

Fraudulent Trade Descriptions

Mr Heath and his Ministers have carried through stringent legislation to ban fraudulent trade descriptions of goods for sale. But the first prosecution under this legislation should be against Mr Heath and his Ministers for presenting to the public a sectional organisation of a minority of European states under the label 'Europe'. Language is free in the choice of names. They could call their Common Market grouping of nine European states 'Paradise' or 'Utopia' or 'Dreamland' or 'Cloud Cuckoo Land' or whatever they wish, and no one could dispute their right to attach whatever label they fancied to their sectional combination. But when they call this minority combination 'Europe', and define their policy for splitting Europe as a policy of 'European unity', this is no question of choice of names, but of political deception by the use of fraudulent labels,

All-European Conference

The aim of developing European co-operation and security needs to be inclusive of all states of Europe on a basis of equality. In contrast to the presentation of the minority organisation of the Common Market nine as 'Europe', the Helsinki Conference, convened for the purpose of preparing the practical arrangements for the planned All-European Conference for Mutual Security and Co-operation, has assembled representatives of the Governments of 34 states, including the US and Canada and the Vatican, and all the states of Europe except Albania. There has been no parallel to such a Conference over the more than a quarter of a century since the war. The fact that British Toryism and the representatives of Nato reaction, after all their prolonged initial attempts to hinder or delay the project have had to declare acceptance of the aim and participate at Helsinki is a measure of the advancing strength of the progressive forces in Europe. But the battle is not over. The Helsinki Conference opened on November 22. The Nato Secretary-General, Dr Luns, greeted it by voicing a public 'warning' against 'the introduction, through the back door at the Security Conference, of a pan-European

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collective security ploy designed to disrupt and replace Nato.' On the day after the opening of the Helsinki Conference the leading Tory organ, the *Daily Telegraph*, on November 23 published an editorial under the title 'Threat from Russia', giving prominence to this Nato 'warning', and complaining that Chancellor Brandt's Ostpolitik had involved his agreement 'to push Russia's plan for the Security Conference', and that this had 'led to a stampede into the Russian trap by other Western Governments.'

Military Calculations

Britain's Foreign Secretary, Sir Alec Douglas-Home, having participated at Helsinki, proceeded to make his report to parliament on December 12. He was careful to maintain formal support for its aims. But his further declarations revealed his negative attitude in practice. He warned that 'declarations of intentions to live in peace do not bring *détente*', and that 'it would be easy and dangerous to be too sanguine about the prospects of *détente* opened up by the preparations for a conference on security and co-operation in Europe and the possibility of talks on force reductions.' Thereafter he proceeded to call attention to 'the hard sobering facts' that arms expenditure of the Warsaw Pact states was increasing. He did not mention that the arms expenditure of the Nato states had increased from $104.3 billion in 1970 to $114.5 billion in 1971. Nor did he call attention to the fact that the special meeting of the 'Eurogroup' of Nato just before he made that speech had decided on a vast further increase of arms expenditure at the moment of the Helsinki Conference. In the forefront of this increase of Nato military expenditure to greet the Helsinki Conference, the increase in British arms expenditure for the coming year will amount according to the Defence correspondent of the *Daily Telegraph* to £443 million, after allowing for inflation, and bring the total of British arms expenditure for the coming year to £3,297 million. A similar note was sounded by President Nixon on December 7 when he declared that the proposal for East-West *détente* 'must rest on a foundation of continued military preparedness.'

Truman's Criminal Legacy

On the occasion of the death of the former US President Truman manifold tributes have been paid to his memory. Official and semi-official spokesmen in Nato countries have described him as having shown the 'ability to grapple with the great issues of his time' and reach 'great decisions', such as the 'bold' decision to drop the atom

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bombs on Japan, thereby supposedly shortening the war and saving hundreds of thousands of lives; the salvation of Western civilisation by his 'firm stand' against the menace of communism and the Soviet Union; the Truman Doctrine opening American peacetime military intervention in Europe, initially in the form of 'military aid' to Greece and Turkey; the building of Nato; the establishment of the separate West German state and its rearmament; the line on Berlin; and the Korean war. History may probably reach a different verdict on this record. It is true that Truman did not originate the cold war. The cold war was already planned in 1942 in the Churchill secret memorandum subsequently revealed by Macmillan, defining the aim of the post-war struggle against 'Russian barbarism' in Europe. Similarly the US General Groves, in charge of the 'Manhattan Project' for constructing the atom bomb, subsequently revealed that he was aware from the outset 'that Russia was the enemy, and that the project was conducted on that basis.' Truman's decision to drop the atom bombs on Japan, and thus be the first to begin nuclear war, did not shorten the war against Japan, which was already suing for peace through the Soviet Union; but in the words of P. M. S. Blackett's *Military and Political Consequences of Atomic Energy*, published in 1948: 'The dropping of the atom bombs was not so much the last military act of the second world war as the first act of the cold diplomatic war with Russia now in progress.' But what Truman did was to wreck and reverse President Roosevelt's policy, set out in the agreements reached at the Teheran and Crimea Conferences, for US-British-Soviet co-operation after the war as the key to the future of world peace. Truman replaced the policy of Roosevelt by the menace against which Roosevelt had warned as the one thing which could 'upset the apple-cart' and ruin prospects after the war, the formation of an Anglo-American bloc against the Soviet Union. 'Unless Russia is faced with an iron fist and strong language another war is in the making,' was the declaration of his Memorandum to the US Secretary of State Byrnes in 1946, and in that same year he presided over Churchill's Fulton speech.

Would-Be Heirs of Truman

This was the deadly path of the cold war and brinkmanship, alongside expansionist military adventures all over the globe, carried forward by Dulles's policies for 'rolling back the frontiers of Communism' by superior military strength, which bedevilled world politics for the following two decades, and whose bankruptcy is today manifest. But the heirs of this criminal legacy of Truman are

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still active. They try to reshape and adapt his aims in the complex modern world situation, when the atom bombs of Hiroshima and Nagasaki are like children's toys in the present stage of technological and strategic missile development, while at the same time the balance of the world has changed, with the deepening world crisis of capitalism, and the advance of socialism and national liberation manifest to all.

From Nuremberg to Vietnam

At the trial of Nazi war criminals before the Nuremberg Tribunal in 1946 the American Chief Prosecutor, Robert Jackson, declared in memorable words:

> If certain acts in violation of treaties are crimes, they are crimes whether the United States does them or Germany does them; and we are not prepared to lay down a rule of criminal conduct against others which we would be unwilling to have invoked against us.

By 1971 the American Deputy Prosecutor at the Nuremberg trials, Professor Telford Taylor, wrote in his *Nuremberg and Vietnam: an American Tragedy*:

> Now the wheel has come full circle, and the fingers of accusation are pointing not at them for whom we have felt scorn and contempt, but at ourselves.

That declaration of the American Deputy Prosecutor at Nuremberg spoke for all those sections of the American people who have been struggling consistently against the criminal barbarism of successive American Presidents and military chiefs in their assault on the peoples of Indo-China, culminating in President Nixon's twelve days of saturation bombardment of Hanoi and Haiphong in the era of Christmas. There has been no parallel in the history of war to the scale and character of this assault. The *Times* on December 28 stated that the seven million tons of explosives dropped by the US Air Force on Vietnam since 1965 constituted more than eighty times the total of bombs dropped on Britain during the whole of the second world war; and on January 13 published a statement quoting the American official claim that the twelve days of intensive bombardment had been 'the heaviest bombardment in history'.

World Solidarity with Vietnam

But there has also been no previous parallel to the scale of public protests by governments and nations all over the world, drawing in

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governments of a wide array of states, including the new Australian Labour Government replacing the previous Australian Government which had participated in the war on Vietnam, and indeed such an array of Governments and Heads of State as to make conspicuous the exception of the subsidised client Governments of American satellites—and the British Tory Government. It was this combination of the indomitable spirit and resolve of the Vietnam people in the face of decades of multiple assault by Western imperialist barbarism, together with the losses inflicted by them on the hordes of invading B52s and other bombers on a scale to alarm the American air chiefs over the extent of the depletion of their strategic reserve throughout the region, and even the beginning of revolt of pilots, alongside the worldwide protests of governments and peoples against President Nixon's substitution of gangsterism for negotiation, which compelled the US to return to negotiations (but alongside continuing heavy bombardment) after the repudiation of the previously negotiated agreement which should have been signed on October 31. The outcome of these renewed negotiations is still in the balance at the time of writing, and it would be premature to make any assumptions. But whatever the immediate outcome of these renewed negotiations it is essential to continue vigilantly aware of the dangers of the long-term strategic aims of American imperialism in relation to East Asia.

'The Kissinger-Nixon Doctrine'

For a fuller understanding of these long-term aims of powerful American imperialist interests in East Asia attention may usefully be given to a penetrating documented exposure which has recently been published in the US, and will shortly be published here in Britain, under the title *Open Secret: the Kissinger-Nixon Doctrine in Asia*. Although this study is limited to the developments up to May 1972, that is, before the new departures of policy with the visits of President Nixon to Peking and Moscow and the promotion of American relations with China and the Soviet Union, this analysis gives illuminating background information carrying forward the previous documented exposure consisting of official records, published in *The Pentagon Papers*, which brought the development up to the Tet offensive and 1969. Valuable is the light thrown on the previous background of Kissinger, whose first book *A World Restored*, on Europe 1812 to 1822, presented Metternich as the model statesman for maintaining the *status quo* against revolutionary stresses, and whose next book *Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy*

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in 1957 set out the theory of 'limited nuclear war':

> The problem of limited nuclear war arises primarily in action against nuclear powers or against powers with vast resources of manpower which are difficult to overcome with conventional technology.

Valuable also is the analysis of the consistency of basic outlook of Nixon, both before he became President and openly proclaimed the conception of negotiation from a position of military superiority:

> The lesson of all history warns us that we should negotiate only when our military superiority is so convincing that we can achieve our objective at the conference table. . .

and after he became President, with his definition of 'sufficiency' of military strength:

> I would say, with regard to Dr Kissinger's suggestion of sufficiency, that that would meet certainly my guideline and, I think, Secretary Laird's guideline with regard to superiority . . . our objective is to be sure that the United States has sufficient military power to defend our interests and to maintain the commitments which this administration determines are in the interest of the United States around the world. I think 'sufficiency' is a better term, actually, than either 'superiority' or 'parity'.
>
> (President Nixon, statement at a press conference, February 6, 1969)

But the greatest value of this study is the detailed factual analysis of the economic, commercial and strategic interests of American imperialism in East Asia, the potential economic resources, especially oil resources, and strategic significance of the whole region, and consequent lines of direction of US policy in the area as a whole, the question of relations with China and Japan, the prolonged Korean war and even more prolonged Vietnam war.

US Crisis of Policy

The US Government and people are faced with a key choice of international policy in the present world situation. This choice may be defined in existing conditions as the choice between the positive line represented by the Salt agreements, with their still continuing negotiations for the second phase, and the promotion of the aim of the European Security Conference, or the other line which found its expression in the violent intensification of the bankrupt Vietnam war. Before he became President, Nixon had repeatedly emphasised the role of the US as 'the greatest Pacific power', and in an article in *Foreign Affairs* in 1967 stated: 'Both our interests and our ideals propel us westward across the Pacific.' This has been

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the traditional outlook of the expansionist forces of US policy for generations. In the modern era since 1945 this policy saw as the main danger the advance of communism or popular anti-imperialist governments, sought to establish client regimes with financial and military aid, built up Japan with a view to future rearmament, spent billions of dollars to maintain Chiang Kai-shek and his dreams of 'reconquering the mainland', and committed US combat troops to prolonged wars in Korea and Vietnam. But experience proved the increasing bankruptcy of the policy of backing Chiang Kai-shek and boycotting the Chinese People's Republic. So came the realist new moves of policy with the journeys of President Nixon to Peking and Moscow. This realist approach no doubt also included some calculations on differences between China and the Soviet Union. But in the outcome the meeting with Soviet leaders in May 1972 produced a series of constructive positive agreements, steps towards limiting the development of nuclear arms, recognition of the principle of peaceful coexistence of states with differing social systems, and support for a European Security Conference. At the same time the parallel line of American imperialism for domination in East Asia was carried to the most extreme intensification in the war in Vietnam. Thus the choice between two paths for US policy in the world is now in the forefront in the present situation, and is bound up equally with the internal situation in the United States and the prospects of development of the international situation.

British People's Responsibility

In this critical stage of development, alike for Britain faced with the offensive of the Tory Government to impose 'Phase Two' of its restriction of living standards and planned imposition of new burdens to pay for entry into the bondage of the Market, and in the international situation, where the main bastion of reaction hindering the progressive advance in Europe is the Tory Government, the British organised working class, with key sections already moving into action, and all sections of the British people have the highest opportunity and responsibility to mobilise their united strength, both to defeat the offensive of Tory reaction in Britain and open the way to the victory of new policies, and to promote the advance of the progressive forces in Europe, as a part of international progressive advance, by strengthening the campaign for the immediate objective of the speediest convening of the planned European Security Conference.

R.P.D.

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ENGINEERS IN THE VANGUARD

Ken Gill

Deputy General Secretary
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Technical and Supervisory Section)

MARTIN JUKES QC, Director General of the Engineering Employers' Federation (EEF) is a man of bluntly-expressed reactionary views. His antipathy towards independent trade unionism would do credit to any corporate state public relations officer.

Addressing the Industrial Correspondents' luncheon on December 15, he said: '. . . it is my belief that, if free collective bargaining, as we have known it in the past, is restored, we should, within a year, be involved in the same inflationary situation as before. . . .' He is all for freedom as long as the unions are weak and unsuccessful. He waves the flag of democracy as long as the workers will guarantee that they won't take advantage of it. He favours the jungle, while he can sit on the elephant's back. Otherwise, he opposes democracy, trade unionism, shop stewards and free collective bargaining. What a problem a well organised working class presents to the apostles of free competition!

Jukes's querulous tones have been echoed by many employers' spokesmen in the last few months. Gone is the confidence with which Heath and his cronies dismissed the diseases of monopoly capitalism in the early days of his crudely crusading private enterprise Government. It turned out to be a little difficult to allow inefficient, unprofitable companies to collapse when whole communities fought back and industries were in imminent danger!

The other side of the policy was the outright assault on trade unionism and the shop steward movement embodied in the Industrial Relations Act. Here they hoped for a docile labour force which would ensure a smooth entry into the 'European' rat-race. The objective of rising profits could still be achieved, thought Ted optimistically. Weak trade unions would ensure rocketing shares and inflated dividends. Once again, however, the strategy was beyond tactical possibility. The demoralisation of Government following the defeats by the miners, power workers and railwaymen was exacerbated by overwhelming trade union non-registration. The prophets of accommodation and disaster in the movement

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shared their discomfort with the national press which had predicted a certain surrender on this issue.

Unfortunately, the heavy blow administered by the Pentonville Five and their millions of supporters was parried by the unnecessary shift by the TUC to allow appearances before the National Industrial Relations Court. This partial retreat was exploited breathlessly by the authorities determined to wrest some solace from a series of crashing defeats.

The only major obstacle to a reversal of fortune for a waning administration was the 1,250,000-strong Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers (AUEW), which, while not as large as the Transport and General Workers' Union (TGWU), has a more homogeneous membership. Its policy, determined by its national conference, remained firm: no co-operation, no registration, no court appearance.

The historical role of vanguard has passed to the engineers. Like the miners in the twenties, its economic position is central to the British economy, although its base is firmer and more profitable than the pits of fifty years ago. While the engineers do not have the mining community level of solidarity, the long tradition of struggle in the engineering industry against the hard line politicos of the EEF has moulded large sections of the membership into experienced fighting components.

The support and defence of the engineers is, then, the working class's priority. The stoppages throughout industry in response to a call to defend the union, although not universally supported, have taken place in the most profitable sectors, thus striking in the pit of the ruling class stomach.

Cranky, greedy demands of individuals, motivated by self-indulgence, have drawn counter-punches far beyond the value of their cause. Goad's Godly campaign against his fellow workers, with its £30,000 touch of Mammon, must be embarrassing. These charades were not envisaged by the architects of the Act. They had a tidier concept but their grand design has not materialised.

The objective of destroying the union has been wildly and expensively missed by a combination of indisciplined actions from individuals like Goad and discordant and 'principled' rigidity from Donaldson and the National Industrial Relations Court (NIRC) It has cost the employing class many millions to extract £50,000 from the AUEW, while the TGWU, equally punished, plodded the legal path to the House of Lords to receive a frosty reaffirmation of the bold Sir John's original verdict.

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It was difficult to persuade many workers to take part in what was widely described as a political strike just before Christmas. It is not easy to convince workers that £50,000 is of significance in a multi-million pound union. But hundreds of thousands responded, and hundreds of thousands more will respond if the Court adds to the burden. Already rank-and-file members of other unions are joining the fray. The line is being held.

But what of the enemy? Where are the folk heroes of 1926? The students, the teachers, the great middle class, the silent majority? They were not driving the trains, not shifting the coal in the seventies. British capitalism has been unable to mobilise these forces because of its relatively weak position compared with fifty years ago. Heath has alienated the students and the teachers, and the middle class is no longer reliable. This is not a change of fashion. It reflects accurately a change in the balance of forces.

There is an innate inability of the Government to devise an overall strategy which will command active support from sections of the population and which can raise profits to a level to make the British capitalist class viable. That weakness is not an intellectual failing. It is not because Heath is mentally inferior to Baldwin. It is because the employing class is unable to run Britain in the old way. Its addiction to coercion illustrates a growing loss of control which is matched by the increasing power and consciousness of the working class.

These factors show the deep and increasing flaws in the capitalist framework, explain the feverish clutching of 'European' straws and light the way for the labour movement. There is no need to accommodate an incomes policy. There is no need to recognise the rough bosses' justice meted out at the NIRC. Many monopolists are having severe doubts about the wisdom of Government measures which wound them more than the adversary.

A united movement around the engineers will defeat the legislation. Unless the movement recognises Heath's weakness it will throw away an opportunity illumined by recent events. It is chastening to realise that only the treachery of right-wing Labour in parliament and an unnecessary nervousness in the industrial field has saved the Tories from the political dustbin. The trend to the left in the advanced capitalist countries has emphasised the anachronism of Heath and his clumsy cronies. Only Britain remains frozen in the rigidity born of a tough philosophy without the power to enforce it.

Martin Jukes is right to be nervous in his complaints 'that collective bargaining must not frustrate the Government's plans.'

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The growing strength of trade union organisation can frustrate the plans to hamstring the trade unions and to freeze the wage packet while profits soar. To destroy those reactionary blueprints will require unity and political purpose. While Jukes boasted of the fact that the Manchester 'sit-ins' (forty-two in number) failed to win the 'inflated claims', he wept at the 'serious imbalance in the bargaining strength at plant level of employers and the union representatives.'

The lessons are clear. We are many—they are few. The power of organised labour only needs a unity of purpose to defeat a frenzied attack which is born of capitalist weakness and a massive loss of confidence by and in the ruling class. On the other hand to fail may mean that we stumble into a corporate state.

DISARMAMENT

Gordon Schaffer

THE year 1973 can mark the first genuine breakthrough to disarmament and coexistence, since the pledges of post-war co-operation with the Soviet Union were jettisoned, and the world plunged into cold war. The measure of the mounting threat to civilisation can be assessed by one single example—today there are 50 times the quantity of nuclear weapons, that existed when the World Peace Council launched the Stockholm Appeal for a ban on the bomb, and the condemnation, as a criminal, of any nation that was first to use it.

We know now that the US had plans to use the bomb in the Berlin crisis of 1948, that the bombers which were stationed on our soil were scheduled to carry the atomic bomb to Moscow, that as a condition of Marshall Aid, the British Government was forced to release the US from its pledge given by Roosevelt to Churchill not to use the bomb, without British agreement.* We know that McArthur was ready to use the bomb in Korea, that US generals talked of employing 'baby nukes' in Vietnam and that a majority of John Kennedy's advisors were ready to use the bomb in the Cuban crisis.

These reminders are necessary because it is all too easy to accept a tenuous peace, balanced on the knife edge of nuclear annihilation,

* These facts are documented in the diaries of James Forrestal and Senator Vandenberg.

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to disguise the reality of a weapon that can destroy mankind, with the use of the word 'deterrent'. The grim fact, that the British people must understand, is that their Government is intent on maintaining this policy. The aim is to forge an alliance, based on nuclear weapons, in the hands of Nato and including the Greek and Turkish dictatorships, and (as soon as they can organise it) Franco Spain, to link the alliance with the EEC, its economic counterpart, and to 'negotiate from strength'.

The moves towards disarmament, which can begin to lay the foundation of peace this year, are the meeting between Nato and Warsaw powers on mutual and balanced force reductions, the continuance of the SALT talks between the US and the USSR on further limitation of missiles and nuclear arms, and the conference of European states, plus the US and Canada, now being prepared in Helsinki.

Another equally important factor, virtually ignored by press and parliament here, is the resolutions accepted by the last Assembly of the United Nations. These renounced the use of force in international relations and prohibited the use of nuclear weapons, for all time, and accepted a proposal for a world disarmament conference, the preparations to start this year.

I attended part of this Assembly session as delegate from the World Peace Council, which has non-governmental status at the UN, and I discussed these resolutions with Jacob Malik, Soviet Ambassador to the UN, who sponsored them on behalf of his Government. He told me:

> We propose prohibition forever of nuclear weapons. One of your English translators used the words 'ban eternally'. That is a very good way to put it. It is no use talking about using these weapons at the second or third stage. No aggressor admits to aggression. A bomb can be exploded by accident or design and the blame put on the innocent party. We must secure the renunciation of force in settling international disputes. We know what sophisticated weapons can do. It is unthinkable that they should be used.

The Soviet attitude to the approaching conference must be understood. It means that the Soviet Union is ready to go to the limit of disarmament. It answers the statements made, even by some peace workers, about the Moscow agreements sanctioning rearmament and the two 'superpowers' adopting the same standpoint. The contrary is the case: the Soviet Union is ready to carry out the UN resolutions. The obstacles to progress have been in the West, particularly in the Nato alliance.

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Here we reach the crux of the problem, as far as Britain is concerned. British foreign policy, whether under Gordon Walker, George Brown, Michael Stewart or Alec Douglas-Home is based on the nuclear strategy of Nato. It gave no support to the *ostpolitik*, which made the first breach in the cold war barriers. There was no attempt to repudiate the statement by Manlio Brosio, then Secretary of Nato, condemning what he called the 'dangerous bilateral moves of Willi Brandt'. The British Government has been forced to accept the existence of two German states and to begin talks for diplomatic recognition and exchange of ambassadors with the German Democratic Republic, but its main preoccupation is with the effort to secure an Anglo-French nuclear force. Heath put forward the plan when he was negotiating Common Market entry for the Tory Government before the Labour victory in 1964. In 1971, Geoffrey Rippon, replying for the Government to a protest from the United Nations Association about the Anglo-French nuclear force proposal, wrote that a joint agreement of this kind with France would not be a breach of the non-proliferation treaty and a 'federated state would not be debarred from succeeding to the former nuclear status of one of its components.' Now, on the eve of disarmament discussions, Defence Minister Lord Carrington repeats the proposal.

The opponents of disarmament and coexistence, as the solution for the problems of Europe, are haunted by the fear that the US will withdraw forces from Europe and will refuse to accept the nuclear commitments of Nato. The agreement between the US and the USSR, reached during the Nixon visit, in fact repudiated the use of nuclear weapons. True, it is difficult to place any credibility on Nixon pledges after the Christmas genocide by the US bombers in Vietnam, and this will undoubtedly make any negotiations more difficult. But the Moscow agreement was based on the hard facts of the situation, and the people of the United States are going to demand withdrawal of forces from Europe and, when they realise the position, they will not be content to put their own cities at nuclear risk, because the Nato countries refuse the chance of disarmament. Thus, for the British Government, the choice will be an even more disastrous expenditure on armaments, or genuine efforts to secure the first steps to disarmament, with nuclear free zones and eventually prohibition of nuclear weapons.

For the British people the issue is life or death. The fact that Nato commanders have received 'guidelines' for the first use of nuclear weapons is so horrifying in its implications that it has been swept under the carpet. But it is set out in black and white in the

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defence white papers. It was most clearly put by the defence correspondent of the *Times* when he wrote on December 2, 1969: 'New Nato guidelines on *initiating* nuclear war in Europe are to be presented to the defence ministers of the alliance.' His despatch was never challenged. The guidelines were duly presented and endorsed. They provide for the gradual escalation of nuclear attacks, based on the insane presumption that this would persuade the other side to negotiate. The *Times* correspondent even disclosed that the Kiessinger-Strauss Government of West Germany was reluctant to put East German targets in the nuclear guidelines, but was persuaded they were necessary.

When these facts became known there were influential protests, including a devastating condemnation by Earl Mountbatten, former member of the Nato Military Commission, but they are still the guidelines.

Will the Federal German Republic agree to their continuance when it is negotiating the basis of coexistence with the German Democratic Republic? Will the British people be prepared to be the main nuclear base with the inevitable consequences if the 'guidelines' were operated?

These issues must be brought into the negotiations. In the initial stages it looks as if the Helsinki Conference for the time being will leave the discussions on detailed proposals *for disarmament* to the Nato-Warsaw talks on mutual and balanced force reductions, and will concentrate on immediate plans to break down the cold war barriers. But in the final analysis, disarmament, and above all repudiation of nuclear weapons, must be the foundation for real peace.

Our task in Britain is to break through the barrier of silence imposed by the press, radio and television, to make the people understand that the chance for peace must not be lost. The response to the appeal, under the title 'The British People Demand Peace and Security for Europe', launched, after detailed discussion, by the Committee for European Security and Co-operation, indicates the gathering support for the campaign to make the European Conference a success. The appeal has already received support from organisations with memberships running into millions. 'We are determined this conference shall not fail,' says the appeal.*

The last TUC conference declared support for this campaign and its aims, and the Labour Party Conference overwhelmingly

* Copies of the appeal and pamphlet by Gordon Schaffer, *Strengthen Peace Now*, are obtainable from Mrs F. Farsky, Hon. Secretary, 27 Calton Avenue, London, SE21.

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accepted as objectives at the European Conference, 'the dissolution of the Nato and Warsaw pacts, the creation of nuclear free zones in central Europe, and general disarmament'. These resolutions mean that the Labour Party is committed to fighting the Tory Government on foreign policy questions as well as on its vicious attacks on the people at home. It means a future Labour Government must reverse the nuclear strategy.

But the struggle to seize the opportunities for peace embraces more than the working class organisations. It commands support from all sections of our people.

CRIMINAL LAW REFORM— A CONTEMPORARY DANGER

F. H. Amphlett Micklewright

IT is unlikely that anybody save lawyers would pay much attention to the proceedings of the Criminal Law Reform Commission. The body is an official commission which exists under the Law Commissioners to consider the reforms necessary in the existing law, and it has been much concerned of late with the number of acquittals. This concern was first manifested in the Criminal Justice Act, 1967, which introduced the dubious procedure of permitting a majority verdict to be taken from a jury under certain conditions. Its latest report concerns itself with certain aspects of procedure which it was intended should receive parliamentary sanction during the coming session. Fortunately, the proposals have been held up by protest but they should be of the deepest concern to every left-wing politician. They would apply to political trials just as much as to any other form of criminal proceeding and could act seriously to the detriment of the working class defendant. Again, they could give the courts a new approach to a criminal trial and be of the greatest assistance in a country which already possesses its political police in MI5 and in the Scotland Yard special branch.

Over half-a-century ago, the judges framed certain rules concerning the taking of statements. Statements taken by the police must be voluntary. There must be nothing like what Mr Justice Streatfield once described as 'trial by police'. Duress, threat and

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inducement must be rigidly excluded. If a defendant so requires, his solicitor can be present when he is questioned. These rules have not got the force of law but they have come to be acted upon and the courts will not accept statements as evidence which have been obtained through their breach. It is now proposed that these rules should be weakened. A defendant need no longer be cautioned before he is charged and the greatest liberty is to be allowed to police questioning. In short, he can be badgered and pestered with questions which he is to be forced to answer. The new proposals insist that a refusal to answer the police questioning may afford presumption of an admission that the defendant is guilty of the charge about which he is being questioned. It is not difficult to imagine the effect which such a process could have upon a unassisted and flurried working class defendant whose right to silence during the police investigations has been taken away. His counsel could insist in court that his failure to answer raises a mere presumption of guilt and that the silence was brought about by other causes. But the prejudice will have been created and could have a disastrous effect upon a jury. Especially would this be the case in a political trial where left-wing politics will have created already an element of prejudice in the minds of a middle class jury. The police investigation has been put into a privileged position previously set aside in this country for many years so far as modern criminal procedure be concerned, whilst the protection afforded by the historic judges' rules will have gone for ever.

There is even worse to follow. It is a strict rule in a criminal court that neither the prosecution nor the judge may refer to the previous convictions of a defendant. He is being tried for the specific offence upon the indictment and not for some general indictment concerning his past character. The common lawyers got rid of 'the indictment of fame' at the beginning of the seventeenth century. A man may have previous convictions but be wholly innocent of the immediate charge. There is only one exception to this strict rule. A man's character may be raised if he attacks the personal characters of the witnesses on the other side, for he has then put his own good character in as evidence. It is only after the verdict has been declared that previous convictions are revealed in open court as pertaining to sentence. This strict policy is now to go, and previous convictions may be revealed to the jury in the course of the prosecution. It does not require much imagination to suggest the effect that such a revelation could have on a jury. The door is open for remarks such as that the defendant is a 'notorious Com-

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munist' or something of the kind. In a political case, the revelation of previous convictions, however petty, would bear down harshly upon the defendant and convince the jury that he really did make a seditious speech or whatever else be the subject of the charge. A glance at political cases tried under the existing procedure as they are outlined in D. N. Pritt's volumes of autobiography or in his series, *Law, Class and Society*, gives cause to wonder how far the left-wing defendant is likely to get a fair trial upon a political charge in the courts as they are. The situation will become far worse if the procedure is to be weakened and the balance weighed against the defendant.

Prior to 1898, the defendant in a criminal case could not give evidence upon his own behalf, a hampering restriction. Reform was opposed by legal reactionaries on the ground that any change would lead to an increase of perjury. Circumstances supported the need for change and a tolerable system was worked out. The defendant could give evidence on his own behalf and be forced to answer cross-examination under pain of contempt. He was thus in the same position as any other witness. But, under the Evidence Amendment Act, 1898, he could not be compelled to answer any question which would incriminate him through the reply which he would be forced to give. If the defendant chose not to go into the witness-box, his counsel might explain his absence to the jury. The prosecution were precluded from referring to the matter although the judge might comment upon his absence in the summing up. There may be many reasons why a defendant may not be called, apart from those with a sinister motive. He may be a flustered and nervous person, easily blustered and shaken, whose appearance in the witness-box would do his case no good at all. It may be that the case can be fully elucidated without his evidence. There may be no purpose in calling the defendant who can add nothing to the story. In any case, he is innocent until he is proved guilty, and it is up to the prosecution to prove his guilt apart from his evidence. It is now suggested that the defendant pleading not guilty should be forced to give evidence and go into the witness-box. The new procedure would introduce a subtle suggestion that he is guilty unless he can prove his innocence, and he is open to every species of loaded question and of other court-room technique which would cause him to trip up. Once again, it is not difficult to see the effect of this attitude upon a political case especially where a left-winger is involved. A recollection of the libel case undertaken by Professor Laski and of the cross-examination of the Professor's political opinions by Sir Patrick Hastings will

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underline the dangers in a criminal court if compulsory evidence be introduced as far as the defendant is concerned.

It has been the policy of the English courts that it is preferable for ninety-nine guilty men to be acquitted than for one innocent man to be condemned. The new proposals would undercut this policy with a 'bloody assize' savagery more reminiscent of the seventeenth than of the twentieth century when criminal procedure is considered. There is one remaining question, and it is that of the reason for the proposed changes. It is difficult to imagine that a stiffened and weighted procedure is really necessary to deal with the modern super-criminal. The great train robbers, the Richardson gang or the Kray brothers were tried under the old procedure and are all now in prison serving long sentences. Can it be that it may prove to be necessary in a period of increasing political disturbance to make easier the job of the political police in securing a conviction? Is there a desire to bring the criminal procedure of this country nearer to that of fascist or semi-fascist governments? The working class must be severely affected by the proposed changes if only by the fact that the large number of defendants are working class and that super-criminals are a tiny minority of those tried. But the working class can be affected even more deeply through the effect of the new procedures upon cases where the substantial charge is that the defendant has broken the law by the method or manner in which he has advocated left-wing political activities.

The new procedures are fraught in every way with grave dangers for the citizen who falls foul of the police. Protest, sometimes unexpected, has come from existing legal circles, and some of it has been from lawyers who are blind to the political implications but who are aware from practical experience of the possible results for justice in general. The protests have held up immediate legislation of a policy which would bring the law a stage nearer to fascism, but the holding up need not be permanent and the proposals could be slipped through at a moment when the immediate clamour has died down. Marxist analysis has already shown, again and again, that the law is the weapon of the ruling class, and the weapon is now to be carried a stage nearer to the totalitarian ideology towards which the ruling class is turning as industrial capitalism enters into a stage of deepening crisis. It is not enough to regard these matters as legal technicalities which may be left to the lawyers. The purport of the new proposals needs to be fully explained in everyday language and implementation must be barred by the volume of working class protest.

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FOR A NEW TURN IN IRELAND

Roger Henshaw
Executive Member
Amalgamated Union of Engineering Workers
(Technical and Supervisory Section)

MANY British people maintain an interest in the problems and history of Ireland and have closely watched recent events in Northern Ireland. Individuals adopt differing positions on the general problem. The author's position is that of a trade unionist and socialist who has always believed in a united socialist Ireland as the ultimate objective.

It was widely accepted that the situation which existed in Northern Ireland five years ago could no longer be tolerated. When the original struggle for civil rights opened, it enjoyed very wide support.

Those British trade unionists, who know the history of Ireland and England over the last 800 years, understand the resulting differing strong political aspirations, from a passionate desire for a united Ireland, through the demand for civil and other rights, to an equally passionate defence of the connection with England.

It now appears that there is not any definite progress at the moment in Northern Ireland. There is a military, political, religious and economic stalemate. All defend their present positions. No effective dialogue is taking place across boundaries. The prospect seems to be a continuing agony and bloodshed unless there is a new policy initiative. By now, original objectives are overlaid with sectarian attitudes and strife, with an admixture of more dubious ambitions and elements.

It must be said that there is a deterioration in sympathy and support because terrorism pursued without achievable aims is always counter-productive. The somewhat mixed-up Provisional objectives are clearly not winnable at this time, however desirable they may appear to their supporters. A growing lack of sympathy amongst British workers must have lessons for the people of Northern Ireland.

Trade unionists and socialists in Britain have had to accept that, when they involve themselves in particular struggles on items of principle, it often turns out that the forces brought into action compel serious reassessment of the possibilities. There are many occasions where the pressure we are able to apply is inadequate to

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achieve our full aims. We then have to compromise for the moment on the basis of achieving whatever practical result is possible. We do not then abandon principles. We take up a position that ultimate objectives require a longer time perspective and more careful strategy and tactics to achieve them. Is there not a lesson in this for the people of Northern Ireland at this stage and especially for workers organised in trade unions?

Terrorist actions, from whatever standpoint, are now causing complete polarisation. It would seem, when we look at the social and class factors involved, that the most progressive and determined sections are immediately located amongst Catholic workers. The problem is that such elements cannot achieve advanced objectives unless their strategy and tactics appeal increasingly to major groupings of Protestant workers. The move away from a struggle for civil rights to trying to achieve long-term objectives, represented most clearly in the position of the Provisionals and their allies, is drastically narrowing the original broad basis of support for the civil rights movement, inside and outside Ireland. The writer's own experience is that, in Northern Ireland, this development has disabled many from participation in progressive action, from fear or growing isolation.

The present strategy and tactics are impossibly narrow and isolated, and the killings and other episodes are becoming increasingly repulsive to workers, who see them as without effective purpose. They are seen as destroying the possibility of advance, as sectarian views and actions nearly always do.

To restore the widest possible unity of workers it would seem necessary to consider reverting to the original civil rights programme, then seeking to work politically to rally maximum support inside and outside Northern Irdland. If such an objective can be re-established as the main focus of activity, the trade unions can be more effectively mobilised to assist the struggle. At one point a tentative offer was made to introduce various civil and social reforms. There is danger of the present modes of struggle losing the opportunity of testing or achieving such gains. Such a move to a new position would not be easy. The alternative would seem to be to continue to try to hold defensively a minority position by force of arms. By definition, that approach must eventually lead to total defeat and set-back.

British trade unionists are pleased to note that trade unions in Northern Ireland have done much to limit and prevent sectarian

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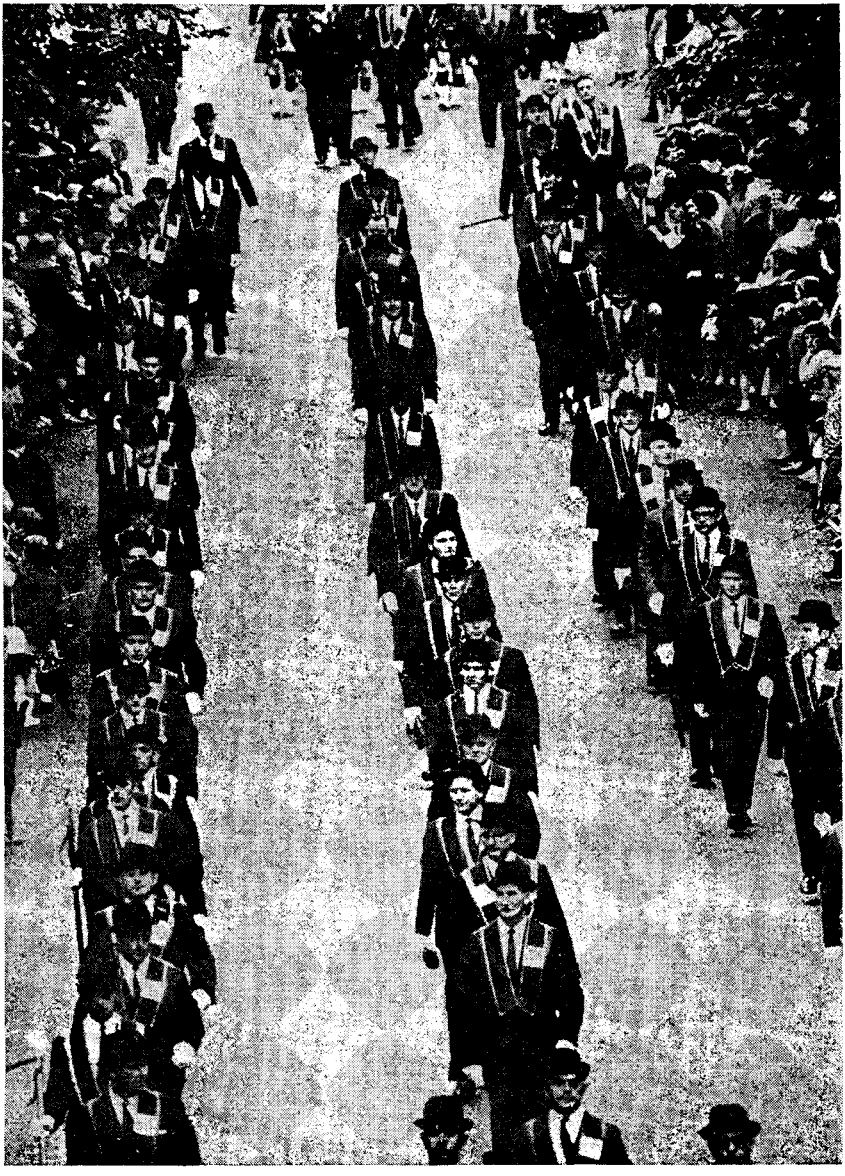
THE BATTLE



Above Orangemen on parade
Opposite Gas

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OF BOGSIDE

The Battle of Bogside, Clive Limpkin
Penguin, 172pp., £1

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(*continued from page 71*)

attitudes growing amongst workers. The latest news that the Northern Ireland district of the Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Unions is taking positive action to counter the new wave of sectarian killings, involving workers, is an excellent development. Such beginnings are unlikely to go much further so long as the total position is obscured by those who pursue very long-term objectives as though they were just round the corner.

No worker in Britain wants to see the old Stormont restored. No worker in Britain wants to see further polarisation towards neo-fascism. Most workers in Britain would support demands for civil rights and the wiping out of past obscenities in this field. The connection between Ireland and the rest of Britain is such that the real solution of the problems of Northern Ireland's workers must depend on winning wide influence amongst all sections of workers in Ireland and Britain.

VIETNAM

Bill Zak
London District Secretary
Furniture, Timber and Allied Trades Union

'Mark! where his carnage and his conquest cease!
He makes a solitude and calls it—peace!'
Lord Byron (1788-1824)

GUERNICA, Rotterdam, Coventry, Dresden. So many names and so many crimes, three committed by Hitler and the Nazis, the fourth by our own country. This is not an attempt to tabulate the many crimes committed by fascism and reaction in Spain and Europe, but to compare their enormity with those committed, not only in the last twelve days of December 1972, against Hanoi and Haiphong and other parts of North Vietnam (Democratic Republic of Vietnam) and South Vietnam, but for the last 18 years or more by the world's 'greatest and most Christian democracy'—the United States of America, and its successive Presidents—Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon.

These 18 odd years have seen the American 'special war', 'local war', 'Vietnamised war', 'Laotianised war', 'Cambodianised war', 'air war of destruction', 'stragetic hamlet policy', 'pacification programme' and much else. These wars have cost the American

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people thousands of lives and over one hundred billion dollars. They have brought destruction and immense suffering to Vietnam and mourning for the millions killed, maimed, tortured and imprisoned.

They have all failed, each being the negation of the preceding policy. The American programme would have collapsed completely had the US not hurriedly deployed the entire Seventh Fleet and half of its strategic air force. This present second 'Americanisation' coming four years after the first is taking place with all its insoluble contradictions and will bring unpredictable results to the aggressor.

Even taking into account Hiroshima and the atom bombs dropped by Truman, the seven million tons of US bombs dropped on Vietnam outweigh by many times the atom bombs dropped on Japan. In twelve days of December 1972, the equivalent of the total tonnage of bombs dropped on this country during the second world war, plus 25 per cent, i.e. 100,000 tons, according to official US sources, were dropped on or around Hanoi and Haiphong.

The result has been the greatest outcry against American policy in Vietnam so far heard. The Governments of most countries in the world have protested against the barbaric policy of genocide carried out by the United States, with the exception of the Governments of the US client states and, of course, Her Majesty's Government.

There are at least one or two redeeming features on this occasion. The General Council of the Trades Union Congress and the National Executive of the Labour Party have made their voices heard in protest. In some ways perhaps more important, Harold Wilson has not only voiced his protest, but has cancelled a series of lectures in the United States in protest at the bombing of Hanoi and Haiphong in December. However, even this cannot give Wilson a new political virginity. His record as Prime Minister and that of his Foreign Secretaries are such as not to be overlooked. On February 9, 1965, regarding raids on which the Government had received advance information, the *Times* could write:

> Reaction at the Foreign Office clearly reflected the views of Mr Michael Stewart . . . that the Americans were bound to hit back in view of the deliberate attacks on their servicemen in South Vietnam . . . .If the Viet Cong were to cease their guerrilla attacks . . . there is no doubt that the British Government would be glad to see negotiations for a new settlement begin.

On March 9, 1965, the *Times* Washington correspondent wrote:

> Britain is rather popular here at present because of the Government's unequivocal support for American policy in Vietnam.

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In February 1966, the US Defence Secretary stated to the House of Representatives that:

> no government in the world has given the United States more support in the Vietnam situation than Britain. . . . And Prime Minister Harold Wilson personally has given strong support.

One could go on with such examples of Labour Government policy on Vietnam throughout their period of office. Wilson and his Foreign Secretaries were doing what others had done before them—carrying out a bipartisan foreign policy. Anthony Eden, British Foreign Secretary, at the Geneva Conference on July 21, 1954, accepted the Final Declaration of the Conference on behalf of the British Government along with the Cease Fire Agreements. The Agreement on Vietnam, Article 1 (see Cmd 9239), stated:

> *A provisional military demarcation line shall be fixed* on either side of which the forces of the two parties shall be regrouped after withdrawal. . . .

The Final Declaration (also Cmd 9239) further includes in paragraph 7:

> The Conference declares that so far as Vietnam is concerned the settlement of political problems, effected on the basis of the respect for the principles of independence, unity and territorial integrity . . . guaranteed by democratic institutions established as a result of free general elections . . . [which] shall be held in July 1956.

Paragraph 6 had confirmed the Cease Fire Agreement when it declared:

> . . . the military demarcation line is provisional and should in no way be interpreted as constituting a political or territorial boundary. . . .

While Eden and the British Government had accepted this position publicly at Geneva, it is clear from Eden's Memoirs that his intention and that of the United States (he refers to Bedell Smith, US representative as 'a splendid friend throughout') was the permanent partition of Vietnam and not territorial integrity. The importance of this cannot be overemphasised as it explains the behaviour of British Foreign Ministers and Governments from July 1954 onwards. It explains why the British Government refused to join with the Soviet Union in bringing pressure on the US and the Saigon regime to force the holding of the general elections stipulated in the Geneva Agreement which would have brought about the peaceful reunification of Vietnam and ended American intervention in Vietnam.

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It explains the servile and lying defence of US policy over the years: the British Government's defence, for instance in 1963, of the use of toxic chemicals; its defence ever since August 1964 of US air attacks on North Vietnam as 'justified defence' and 'protection of US servicemen in South Vietnam'; its continued echoing of the US allegation that the war was started by North Vietnam. All these statements of our various Governments, looked at today when the whole world knows the truth, lead to the conclusion that they were made either by fools or knaves.

In view of such a record it is no wonder that our Vietnamese friends, when asked what we in Britain could do in support of their struggle, stressed that, in addition to material aid for which they are most grateful, it is most important for us to force a change in the policy of the British Government.

In the circumstances of today it is not perhaps surprising that it was not until January 3, 1973, that the *Times* in face of the flood of letters condemning United States policy and its barbarous attacks on Vietnam, found someone to try and defend the United States. Even then they could only get a rather old warhorse—Sir Edwin Leather (Ted Leather), ex-Tory MP and Minister. His letter was adequately answered by Graham Greene (*Times*, January 6), yet, in view of two points made by Leather, more has to be said. Among other things, he cited as supposed facts:

> Fact 1. North Vietnam invaded South Vietnam; *not* the other way round.
> Fact 2. South Vietnam freely and voluntarily invoked the aid of its ally, the United States, under treaty obligations.

Leather does not mention that these 'treaty obligations' were adjudged in a unanimous report by the International Control Commission to be a breach of the Geneva Agreements. Quotations from the Cease Fire Agreement and the Final Declaration already given also dispose of these supposed facts. Further, in a report to the International War Crimes Tribunal in May 1967, M Lelio Basso, Italian MP, international lawyer and Professor at Rome University, dealt with the Geneva Agreements and US aggression from the point of view of international law. He drew the following conclusion:

> What is absolutely inadmissible in law is that the Saigon authorities, and with them the American Government, demand integral respect of the Agreements by the Hanoi Government, but on their part refuse to submit to them....

Today, on all reports available, Nixon has thrown away the mask of

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pretending that he desires the implementation of the Geneva Agreements. The major difference which the Americans are raising against the October 1972 Agreement is precisely on this question. At the time of writing, the talks in Paris between Kissinger and Le Duc Tho and Xuan Thuy are about to restart. Nixon has had to stop his barbaric December bombing north of the 20th parallel as a result of the international movement of protest, of the clear statement by the DRV that there would be no resumption of negotiations while the bombing continued, and because of the effectiveness of the Hanoi and Haiphong air defences. Jeremy Campbell, reporting from Washington (*Evening Standard*, December 30, 1972), wrote:

> President Nixon clearly alarmed by the growing losses of B52 bombers in raids over Hanoi . . . a thick blanket of silence has come down on most news about the air war. . . . And at the Pentagon there is concern that the heavy SAM bombardment may be taking 'a heavy mental toll' of American air crews who are flying through fierce anti-aircraft fire after years of bombing undefended targets.

Le Duc Tho has made clear that peace is possible on the basis of the October Agreement, but that the arrogance and impudence of Nixon after accepting the Agreement demanding 120 amendments can only result in the continuation of the war. After nearly 30 years of armed struggle for their independence, the Vietnamese people are more than unlikely to surrender what was laid down in the Geneva Agreements: that Vietnam is *one*; that reunification by peaceful means is the final objective; and that meantime South and North, independent and with no outside interference, will coexist and bring about the reunification. Neither will the Vietnamese people abandon the many tens of thousands of patriots in Thieu's jails to his mercy.

Nixon's ambition to keep a supposedly independent Republic of South Vietnam is doomed to failure. It is either the October Agreement or the continuation of the war.

The British labour movement must remember the continual policy of servile support of our Government for United States policy and aggression in Vietnam. Therefore, the conduct of their struggle in support of the Vietnamese people must above all be directed against the Government, not only to force dissociation from United States policy in Vietnam, but for its outright condemnation.

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POWELL AS POET

Bob Dixon

IT is not generally known, perhaps, that Enoch Powell has had poetry published. In fact, as far as literature is concerned, the matter is of no consequence, but a close study of his poetry is, politically, very revealing—even though the muse has, apparently, for some 20 years now, ceased to visit Mr Powell. *First Poems* was published in 1937. A typical example is the following:

> Sharp rises on the cloudless blue
> The knife-edge of the hills,
> And boundless sunlight clear and true
> The vale below them fills.
>
> As clear as light, sharp as a knife,
> A truth springs in my breast:
> There are but two things, death and life,
> And death of these is best.

Powell's verse, in its general outlook, reverts to the Georgian era which, in turn, looks back to the Romantic period. Death-longing is not unusual in subjective verse of this type but it is not very usual for it to be as pervasive as it is in this volume. Poem after poem expresses either a death-wish, a lament for dead friends or apprehension at the prospect of death. Coupled with this is the expression of regret at the passing years and, in later poems, regret over lost youth. What this amounts to, put very briefly, is that the changes brought about by time are, in themselves, felt to be bad. Death, as the total absence of any further possibility of change, or of the pain associated with change, becomes attractive. The links between Powell the poet and Powell the politician begin to appear.

Politically, and as one might expect, this preoccupation with death, in an extreme form, is associated with fascism. Unfortunately, it is, usually, the death of other people which is involved when a person with this kind of mentality, frustrated at being unable to come to terms with life, lashes out at his fellow beings. Pent-up emotion, with no positive outlet, becomes aggression. In this connection it is interesting to recall the slogan, or war-cry, of the Spanish fascists during the Spanish civil war—'Viva la muerte!' (Long live death!)—and the words of Mussolini's son: 'War is beautiful.'

Although the state of death has its attraction, there is what can

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almost be described as a jealous hatred of the dead in the following poem. It would be difficult to find another poem in English which contained sentiments as odious and inhuman as those expressed here:

I hate the ugly, hate the old,
I hate the lame and weak,
But more than all I hate the dead
That lie so still in their earthen bed
And never dare to rise.

I only love the strong and bold,
The flashing eye, the reddening cheek,
But more than all I love the fire
In youthful limbs, that wakes desire
And never satisfies.

(*First Poems*)

Strange lines, one would think, for someone later to become a Minister of Health. In these poems, no other state of affairs, it seems, can compensate for the pain of change itself. Even love is seen as a 'torment', a disturbance, because it is a state necessitating readjustment and change:

. . . desire
Is one with pain:
Unending sorrow is its hire,
Death still the gain.

But whoso hath desire forsworn,
His pain shall cease,
And he into our death reborn
Shall live at peace.

(*First Poems*)

The next stop on this line is, clearly, the monastery. The usual reaction to love, in all three of the published volumes of poetry, is one of pain. The imagery in these poems usually bears out the idea of pain and disturbance though the imagery of burning and fire, conventionally associated with love, is also present. In the hands of an inferior poet, this can have unfortunate and, one presumes, unintended consequences:

I did not speak, but when I saw you turn
And cross your right leg on your left, and fold
Your hands around your knee, I felt a flow
Of white-hot lava seething up the old volcano-shaft.

(*Casting Off*, 1939)

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As within the life of man, so in the natural world, change brings with it pain. Even spring, therefore, the season when change and renewal are most obvious, must fail to please:

> I hate the growing light of spring,
> I hate the lingering sun,
> I hate the sights that only bring
> Regret for summers done.
>
> (*First Poems*)

The more positive view, which normally unites poets of every time and place, would be to look forward to summers yet to come. But no, Powell's eyes are fixed firmly on the past. One wonders whether this poet hates everything to do with life. Again, the imagery associated with spring in these poems is invariably that of pain—'The torture of the trees in bloom'—and disease:

> . . . springtime . . .
> . . .
> Draws out the world's deep leprosy
> That scabs from year to year.

Again,

> . . . with yellow death aflower
> The meadows smile.

The whole complex is explicitly summed up in the poem entitled 'The Spring':

> I hear and tremble. Near and far
> Ascends a cry of pain;
> For Nature's ancient, mortal scar
> Has burst and bleeds again.
>
> Yellow and white on field and tree
> Drops of her blood appear,
> Wrung out in bitter agony
> By the returning year;
>
> And nature, all her body through,
> Shudders and draws quick breath;
> She stirs and groans and wakes anew
> To life and pain and death.

Life, as it is nothing more than a painful prelude to death, is to be hated. 'Viva la muerte!' (Still, in 1964, in a speech to the Royal Society of St George, Powell could speak of 'the sadness of spring'.) It is interesting to note, in passing, that Eliot, another poet inclined

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towards fascism, takes a similar view of spring in 'The Waste Land':

> April is the cruellest month, breeding
> Lilacs out of the dead land . . .

Powell's last book of poetry, published in 1951, was a double one. It contained the collection, 'Dancer's End', written mainly between 1938 and 1945, together with a later group, 'The Wedding Gift', written in the early summer of 1950. In this last book, the old themes are still present but with variations. There are also some new developments, none of them surprising in view of the earlier work. Religion, in the Church of England approach, appears as a main theme in the last few poems of 'Dancer's End' and becomes even more prominent in 'The Wedding Gift'. Certain heroes are celebrated—significantly, those powerful in a military sense such as Charles XII of Sweden and Alexander the Great. These are models of 'human excellence'.

In fact, royalism, closely allied with religion and with imperialism, emerges as a main preoccupation. One poem, entitled **'R.I.',** is in the metre of 'God Save the Queen' and contains words such as 'sovran' and 'mad'st' together with other archaic word-forms. In fact, the vocabulary gets more and more archaic, along with the themes. It is unlikely that Powell will again commit himself to verse as, clearly, there is nowhere else to go and nothing more to say. The ingredients of religion, royalism and imperialism, however, and unfortunately, can still form a potent mixture, known as racialism, in politics. With racialism, we are back at the frustration/aggression syndrome touched upon earlier but this time in a more specific way. The language of the later politician as noted in the Labour Research Department's pamphlet, *Powell and his Allies*, now falls into place:

> . . . if we ignore the content of [Powell's] speeches and merely examine his vocabulary it is very revealing. His metaphors and adjectives are almost exclusively ugly and cruel; his speeches are splattered with 'evils', 'insane', 'mad', 'lunacy', 'tyranny', 'conspiracy', 'filthy', etc. A linguistic examination of the two immigration speeches is particularly instructive. The metaphors used throughout are military and violent: 'invasion of our body politic', 'alien territory', 'whole areas, towns . . . occupied', 'detachments from . . . the West Indies or India or Pakistan encamped in certain areas in England', 'whip hand', 'throwing a match on to gunpowder', 'much blood', 'impending disaster', 'national danger'. The military language spills over into the inevitable conspiracy theory; the 'dangerous' Race Relations Bill 'is to be enacted to give the stranger, the disgruntled and the *agent provocateur* the power to

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pillory' white people and will give 'these dangerous and divisive elements' (i.e. coloured communities) the ability to 'organise' to 'agitate and campaign against their fellow citizens and to overawe and dominate the rest' with 'legal weapons'.

The outline picture is now virtually complete. What emerges is a personality at once rigid and immature. What we have seen fits in very well with two hypotheses familiar to sociologists. One holds that all aggression is the result of frustration. The other, the scapegoat theory, asserts that aggression will be displaced on to a victim unable to retaliate (in social terms, a weak minority) when the cause of the aggression cannot be faced. Scapegoats change, according to national circumstances. The Jews have usually fitted the bill but, failing that, West Indians and Pakistanis will serve and even the Irish can be utilised.

Few poets are more explicit than Powell. He is, after all, his own best commentator, as in 'The Piper', a poem from *Dancer's End*:

I piped and they would follow
At hearing of the sound
From field and heath and hollow
And all the country round.

I cared not where the road led
Nor understood the strain,
But still my only care was
To pipe and pipe again.

Alas! Long since afar off
I glimpsed the distant goal;
Long since the music's meaning
Has sunk into my soul.

But still from heath and hollow—
To warn is wasted breath—
They hear my pipe and follow
Along the road to death.

RUSKIN COLLEGE ESSAYS

The Ruskin College entrance essays set topical challenges to adult students seeking full-time education: 'Is disobedience to law ever justifiable in a democracy?', 'Does the Labour Party need the trade unions more than the unions need the Labour Party?' and other questions provide plenty of scope.

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KNOCKING THE SOVIET ECONOMY

Andrew Rothstein

MR Wedgwood Benn, lately chairman of the Labour Party, was reported on October 25 as having told Labour backbenchers that the time had come to consider the moral responsibility of newspapers and broadcasting for the truth of what they tell the public, 'almost a Hippocratic Oath as a code of conduct' (similar to that taken by the doctors). The trade unions in particular had their motives regularly distorted and their members insulted, he said.

He might with even greater justice have given the example of the Soviet Union, on whom the millionaire press and its ancillaries have never ceased revenging themselves for the blow inflicted on millionaires by the Russian workers in November 1917. Reporting on Soviet agriculture in recent months has been a striking case in point.

The difficulties encountered in 1972 were already referred to in the September *Labour Monthly*. There had been in 1971 a very bitter winter, without snowfalls, in which the autumn sowings perished in some of the most productive regions of the USSR, necessitating much resowing, and then a drought of rarely paralleled intensity and duration over wide areas in central and eastern Russia: while where good harvests did mature (as in Asiatic territories) rainfalls made harvesting exceptionally difficult. None of this was hidden, and the capitalist press fell upon the news with ill-concealed delight, especially as the autumn advanced.

Its comments rapidly moved from phrases like 'extremely bad luck' (*Observer*, August 13) to 'disastrous harvest' (*Economist*, August 16), 'near catastrophe' (*Telegraph*, September 27), and finally 'Russia's Miserable Harvest'—the heading to the *Times* leading article, which said the harvest was 'appallingly low' (November 10). But these expressions of sympathy (?) had an unconcealed political purpose. The *Observer*, in the passage quoted, spoke of 'the ramshackle structure of Soviet agriculture'. The *Times*, on September 15, said that 'apparently' the Soviet Union could not cultivate its huge plains 'with sufficient efficiency to meet her needs'. The *Telegraph* had already (September 4) spoken of the 'virgin lands fiasco', and said it was 'a comment on Soviet economics' that Russia, which 'used to be called the granary of Europe', was buying grain abroad. The paper liked the phrase about 'the granary' so much that it

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repeated the words in an editorial on September 29, rubbing in the moral that the Soviet Union's 'state-owned or state-controlled system of agriculture is grossly inefficient.' So also the *Times* (October 31) said that 'bad weather and poor management had made it necessary to turn to the US': while its leading article (November 10), already quoted, explained that harvests would be better 'if the authorities ever found a way of persuading the collectivised peasants to work as hard on the collectivised land as they do on their private smallholdings'—being 'discouraged' by socialism (*Economist*, January 13).

The net effect of all this was to blame socialist agriculture—the 32,300 collective farms and the 15,500 state farms—for the deficiencies of the harvest.

Ignorance and prejudice ran a neck-and-neck race in these press comments. *First.* In 1909-13, the best years of Russia's capitalist agriculture, some 60 million able-bodied peasants of working age produced an annual average of 72.5 million tons of grain, 680,000 tons of cotton, 10,100,000 tons of sugar-beet and 4,800,000 tons of meat. In 1966-70, less than 24 million able-bodied collective farmers and state farm workers—40 per cent of the numbers in tsarist days—produced an annual average of 167.6 million tons of grain (i.e. more than double), 6,100,000 tons of cotton (about nine times as much), 81 million tons of sugarbeet (about eight times as much) and 11,600,000 tons of meat (more than twice as much). The population had gone up in the meantime by roughly half, from just over 159 millions to just over 237 millions. *So there was far more of all that produce for the people per head in Soviet times, and far more turned out per country worker.* On which side was the 'inefficiency' and 'mismanagement', therefore?

Second. Tsarist Russia was a 'granary'. Why? Because she was exporting 8-10 million tons of grain a year out of her *shortage*—with the consequence of general underfeeding among the peasants, constant epidemics, an infant death-rate of over 270 per 1,000, an average expectation of life of 32 (this was the meaning of the notorious dictum of the Tsar's Minister of Finance Vyshnegradsky, 'Let's go hungry, but export': he didn't include himself!). Today the peasants and workers eat their fill, expectation of life in 1971 was 70, infant death-rate was down to 23 per 1,000, epidemics were eliminated or heavily controlled—but average grain exports over 1966-70 were 5-6 million tons. Naturally, the old scheme of things suited the *Telegraph*—and the *Economist*, also babbling of tsarist exports.

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Third. What country families in the USSR (state farm workers as well as collective farmers) grow on their smallholdings are vegetables, chickens and pigs, and they keep a cow or two—all for domestic consumption, any surplus (chiefly eggs and potatoes) going to the nearest town market. This work is done mainly by elderly people and housewives. The vast majority of able-bodied collective farmers, men and women, work a full day on their collectively-owned enterprise, where the country's staple foodstuffs and raw materials are produced in their great bulk—and the results of this socialisation of agriculture have already been noted. However persuasively the *Times* leader-writers argue, Soviet collective farmers are not such idiots as to reverse the process, though they naturally lose no opportunity of improving their methods.

Fourth. After all the difficulties of 1972, the ultimate harvest proved to be a little above the 1966-70 average mentioned earlier, i.e. about 168 million tons—not by any means what it might have been in a normal year, but still *the fifth largest in 110 years of recorded Russian agricultural history!* This was due to precisely the planned socialist organisation of agriculture—and of industry as well, which enables thousands of agricultural machines to be moved from area to area as required, thousands of lorries to be switched from town to country at short notice, and to get tens of thousands of trade unionists to go from factories and the armed forces to help in servicing or driving agricultural equipment—while (for example) co-operators go into the countryside, in emergencies like this, organising hot meals for workers in the field. As a consequence, Kazakhstan —with 55 million acres of crops to gather, including most of those virgin lands supposed to be a 'fiasco'—harvested 27 million tons of grain, 12 per cent more than planned *for 1975*, and delivered nearly 16½ million tons to the state, largely overfulfilling its plan. Altai Territory delivered 5 million tons, also considerably overfulfilling its plan. So did the three Baltic Republics, and a number of regions of the Ukraine, and Belorussia, and the North Ossetian and Dagestan Autonomous Republics, and many more.

We may leave the pundits of Fleet Street to explain why socialist management was successful in so many widely separated areas (for example, the unprecedented harvest of 7,300,000 tons of cotton in Central Asia) if it was the reason for poor harvests in others—just those stricken by drought. The real situation was summed up in the November 6 anniversary speech by Kirill Mazurov, on behalf of the Party leadership and the Soviet Government:

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> Experience shows that our agriculture is capable of overcoming any difficulties because it is buttressed by the stable economy of a developed socialist society, technical equipment, the skill of working people in fields and livestock farms, the mutual aid of the fraternal republics.

Evidently the contrast between croakings and performance, however, was too glaring for someone. So the *Times*, on December 5, belatedly tried a new tack. Its Foreign Editor announced that the 'continued inefficiency' of Soviet agriculture forces him to 'conclude that the world cannot afford Russian Communism much longer.' Churchill and Hitler, by the way, drew the same conclusions in their day, but not (on the surface) for the same reasons as Mr Heren. He told British housewives that they are to pay more for bread because of Soviet grain purchases overseas. Moreover the US—with its 'free market economy' and the 'freedom of science and native shrewdness which the system encourages'—expects to harvest 260 million tons of grain this year, as against the Soviet Union's 168 million tons. And all because of 'the ideological straitjacket which continues to paralyse Russian agriculture.' So he suggested that, with every grain shipment from the US, one of the 40,000 experts of the US Department of Agriculture should be allowed to go in, to give the Soviet Union their 'knowhow', and save the world from potential famine.

Now it is a fact, as we wrote four months ago, that the Soviet Union bought large quantities of grain abroad in 1972. But why? Because (as the Soviet press has made clear) when bad harvests made it probable that considerable areas would be left without adequate cattle fodder and seed for their *immediate* needs, the Soviet Government drew on its reserves: and there has been much material in the Soviet press from local people, appreciating this timely action. Being a careful manager, the Soviet Government as on previous occasions bought abroad to restock reserves, not to repair the 'ideological straitjacket'. Soviet people are not eating 'bread supplied by the capitalist superpowers' (*Economist*, January 13).

But what about Soviet 'inefficiency', once again? It is certain of course that capitalism is more efficient than feudalism: and equally that American agriculture was capitalist from scratch, while the Russian countryside was run as a serf economy until 1861, then entered upon capitalist development with a heavy and shackling inheritance of feudal conditions. Any reputable history describes them, and they lasted with only partial changes until the revolution. After 1917 the Soviet people had to set about modernising—not only agriculture, but industry and transport, health services and

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education—in extremely difficult conditions: not least because of the shrewd foreign capitalists, who first organised the invasions and civil wars of 1917-22 and later built up Hitler to 'do it again' from 1941-45. We cannot expect Mr Heren, of course, to think of the 70,000 villages and tens of thousands of collective and state farms plundered and wrecked by the Nazis in those years: experiences which, as it happens, were spared the American farmers.

Nevertheless, when all is said and done, the figures given earlier (from the Central Statistical Department's annuals) show that the 'Marxist inefficiency' of Soviet agriculture is a myth, even though it did not have the benefit of those 40,000 American experts. The *Times* man evidently is unaware that, while the output of grain in tsarist Russia (1909-13) was 73 per cent of the American, it had grown to 85 per cent by 1966-70, despite the 60 per cent decline in the numbers producing it. Nor does he know, to all appearances, that Soviet agriculture itself has over 489,000 experts—who may perhaps modestly expect to know somewhat more about the much more varied soils and climates in the Soviet Union (8,650,000 square miles) than even their colleagues from the US (3,500,000 square miles)—colleagues, by the way, whom they have more than once welcomed precisely because of their practical experience, as Soviet agriculturists and others working in the national economy have always welcomed those who come with practical suggestions, not anti-Soviet propaganda.

Incidentally, Mr Heren might have remembered that in their time Soviet country people have had much experience of the blessings of 'free market enterprise'—and it left them (apart from the descendants of some kulaks) without any bias in its favour, putting things mildly. They (or their parents) have known the misery of hundreds of thousands of ruined peasants and their families being driven off the land every year in hopeless poverty by the operation of that same 'freedom', in the interests of 'efficiency', i.e. of private profit, especially in the last ten years of tsardom. And they may not be great readers of the *Statesman's Year-Book*, but they know very well the grim facts lying behind that worthy volume's dry information: that in 1940 there were in the US 6,350,000 farmers, but that by 1971 there were only 2,876,000.

No, socialism, not the rat-race of capitalism, is their way of life. They naturally seek to improve it from year to year, and have shown many times that they are willing to learn to make it more efficient. But they are not the sort of people to cut their own throats. They wouldn't let Churchill or Hitler do it, and they won't yield to the

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blandishments of Fleet Street and do it themselves.

Still, hope springs eternal in the human breast, as Pope said. . . . The Supreme Soviet on December 18 heard reports on the 1973 economic plan and budget which showed that careful account is being taken of the harvest difficulties—especially as weather reports were none too promising for the present winter. Industrial output had been affected by the efforts described earlier: some industries are not fully utilising their equipment. Consequently there had been prudent revision of some plans: heavy industries to produce 'only' 6.3 per cent more than this year, instead of the 6.5 per cent rise of 1972 compared with 1971; light industries to produce 'only' 4.5 per cent more than this year; household goods of all kinds (which both heavy and light industries produce) 'only' 11.5 per cent more; food-processing factories 2 per cent more.

The opportunity was too good for our Fleet Street instructors to miss. The *Times* next day headed its report: 'Russia cuts back consumer goods production.' On December 22 its leading article reverted to the 'disastrous harvest' and went a bit further, stating that this had 'led to food shortages' (a story repudiated by speakers at the session and by Leonid Brezhnev on the 21st). The *Times* went on to speak with confident pessimism of 'a lack of vitality in the economy', and to advise the Russians that, if this was to change, there should be 'political changes' as well.

A hungry chicken, runs my favourite Russian proverb, can't help dreaming of millet—but it's only a dream. For one thing, it is not *production* of consumer goods that is to be reduced in 1973, but the *rate of increase* of such production, a very different thing. Moreover, it is ludicrous to lecture Soviet planners on smaller *increases* as a sign of 'lack of vitality': look who's talking, they may reply—when the Tory Government's dream of 5 per cent growth has been riddled, first by the President of the Confederation of British Industry (December 5), who called it 'unrealistic' because based on inflation and a floating (i.e. devalued) pound—unlike the Soviet plans—and then by the Institute of Economic and Social Research (December 12), which for the same reasons put anticipated growth at only 2½ per cent.

And secondly, what nonsense to talk of 'lack of vitality' when in 1972 Soviet industry produced more than all the prewar five year plans put together, and in 1971-72 50 per cent more than five years before! An average *wage* rise of 7 per cent in 1972, *collective farmers' remuneration* rise of over 8 per cent, *student grants* rise of 25 per cent, *retail trade* growth of nearly 7 per cent—are these signs of 'lack of

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vitality'? Well over 2 million *new apartments* tenanted; many hundreds of new *schools, hospitals, workers' and village clubs* opened; hundreds of miles of new *railway lines* and oil or gas *pipelines*, thousands of miles of new *hard-surface roads* built—all in 1972: what a 'dull economy' (another of the *Times*'s cheery phrases) it must be!

VETERANS MEET

(*We are pleased to publish these extracts from a longer report of this journey*—Ed. *LM*)

FOURTEEN VETERANS of the Communist Party of Great Britain, whose ages range from 65 years to 82 years, and including foundation members, spent 16 days in the Soviet Union from July 16 to July 31, 1972. For myself, it was a unique experience and an opportunity to renew and observe changes that have taken place since my first visit to the Soviet Union 42 years ago. . . .

The Kiev Institute of Gerontology was of particular interest to our group of veterans—perhaps from being in the age group who hope to continue life as long as possible. The Director gave greetings from the Institute, spoke of the links with English Gerontologists, and mentioned Alex Comfort and Dr Ferguson of Glasgow. Institutes of Gerontology, he said, exist in Romania, Bulgaria, the US, Japan, France and two in Italy. In 1958 the Kiev Institute of Gerontology was organised as one of a chain of scientific institutes, collecting and examining research data in the whole field of ageing. Biological science says man can live to 110 years. In the Soviet Union there are 28 million people over 60 years of age—11 per cent of the population. The Ukraine has 110,000 people over 100 years old. Some 80,000 of the doctors and scientists are 80 years of age, and most of them are still active. Elderly people work not full time but part time. They can still do a great amount of work but not at the same rate. The problem of ageing is acute, one reason being the change in the composition of the population in many industrial countries where there is an increase in the numbers of the aged and a decline in the birth-rate. The Government and the Party in the Soviet Union are concerned about gerontology—because people over 60 years are valuable people with experience and knowledge, not only of books but of life. . . .

We went to the Marx-Lenin Institute in Moscow, housed in a building which had been for some years the headquarters of the Communist International. After a chat about the work of the Institute and inspecting the various sections, we settled down around a very long table to meet veterans of the Soviet Communist Party who had come specially to meet us. The meeting was chaired by a Comrade Petrovsky who told us there were 2,500 members of an historical society connected with the Institute: their average age was between 70 and 80 years. Twenty per cent had joined the Party before the February revolution and 70 per cent during the revolution. Three women and two men veterans spoke to us. One of the women had worked in the trade union movement in Petrograd from 1907. She also recalled the 1920s when, in the midst of starvation and incredible

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difficulties, they had retained their enthusiasm for the Soviet Republic. One of the women was secretary of the Crimean section of the Old Bolsheviks Association. They regarded it as their special task to educate the young about the history of the Party and the fight to overthrow tsarism and, later, capitalism.

The third woman comrade, Comrade Ludvinskaya, was one of the oldest living Party members. Though nearly 90, she spoke to us for a good half hour. She had joined the Party in Odessa in 1903. In 1907 she was a delegate to the Petrograd Conference of the Party—a conference which had been promptly transferred to Finland, because the police had discovered their meeting place. 'Shortly after entering the conference hall (in Finland) I was approached by an unknown comrade who plied me with very many questions about the state of the Party and the working class in Odessa. After the opening of the conference, this comrade was called to the rostrum to give the main report. It was Lenin. "Why didn't you tell me who you were?" I asked him afterwards. "We never give our names, comrade, to people that we don't know," he replied.' Ludvinskaya had met Lenin's wife at the same time.

The principal male speaker came from Siberia. He had met Lenin in 1917, had fought in the interventionist wars, and in 1918-19 had engaged in underground activities in the Omsk region. He had written a number of stories of those far-off events, and he presented me with a copy of his latest volume.

CHARLIE HOYLE

THE MUNICH DRAMA (5)

I. M. Maisky

(*This fifth instalment from Academician Maisky covers the farce of the Runciman mission to Prague in August 1938, the firm guarantee given by the Soviet Union that it would fulfil its obligations under the Soviet-Czech Pact, and the explosive atmosphere at the opening of the League of Nations Assembly in September 1938*—Ed. *LM*)

ON August 4, 1938, the Runciman mission began its work in Prague. From the start the head of the mission behaved with the highest degree of self-importance, looking upon the Czechs with condescension and keeping his relations with them on a purely official basis. On the other hand he showed himself to be clearly drawn to the Sudeten barons and, on the pretext of 'studying' their views and moods, visited their castles, which were guarded by Henlein's stormtroopers. The whole spirit of the mission and all its activities left no room for doubt that it was continuing Chamberlain's line and that its 'advice' to the Czechoslovak Government and people

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would boil down to the same thing: 'Make concessions and more concessions!'

By the end of his stay in Prague, Runciman had made up his mind about the idea that nad been fermenting in his head (and in Chamberlain's) that 'in the interests of preserving peace' the Sudetenland must be taken away from Czechoslovakia and handed over to Hitler's Germany. Hitler was making increasingly threatening gestures. He embarked on big manoeuvres with troop concentrations on the Saxonian and Silesian borders with Czechoslovakia. German propaganda presaged major events in connection with the Nazi congress in Nuremberg on September 5.

The British and French Governments continued to assure the public that nothing in particular was going on and that people might continue calmly enjoying their holidays. The only sign of nervousness was the instruction sent to Neville Henderson, British Ambassador in Berlin, suggesting that he ascertain the possibilities of a personal meeting between Hitler and Chamberlain. Not everybody, even in British ruling circles, was in accord with Chamberlain. Here are a few extracts from my diary:

August 16, 1938. Eden has talked a great deal with Masaryk about Czechoslovakia. He tried to persuade him not to give in. . . . Prague's firm position will convince France to come to her defence. In the final count Britain will not be able to withhold support from France. . . . The only way to avert war is to create a London-Paris-Moscow 'axis' with a friendly rear in the form of the US. But is Chamberlain really capable of this? His line is to ignore the USSR. . . . But Halifax is finding a definite capacity for evolution. . . . A rift is becoming noticeable between Chamberlain and Halifax.

August 20, I met Lloyd George in the Houses of Parliament. I asked him about the positions of Britain and France if the Czech events took a serious turn. Lloyd George answered categorically: 'Neither the British Government nor the French will do anything really effective to defend Czechoslovakia from German agression. . . .'

September 1. Yesterday Churchill invited me to dinner. . . . The European situation, he said, was extremely serious. War could break out today or tomorrow. . . . The most important thing was to prevent it. How? Churchill's plan was this. At the crucial moment when the talks finally found themselves in a blind alley and Hitler began to brandish his weapons, Britain, France and the USSR must hand Germany a collective note containing protests against the attack on Czechoslovakia. . . . Such a *démarche*, which would undoubtedly receive moral support from Roosevelt, would scare Hitler and lay the basis for the London-Paris-Moscow 'axis'. Only the presence of such an 'axis' could save mankind from another war. . . . What would the Soviet Government's attitude be towards this plan? I replied that I could not speak for the Soviet Government. Personally I thought it was a good plan, but that it had

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no chance of being put into practice. I could not believe that Chamberlain would agree to act with the USSR against Germany.

My scepticism, unfortunately, proved justified. The majority of those in British ruling circles blindly followed Chamberlain.

On September 3, I received a telegram from Moscow. In it Maxim Litvinov reported that he had asked Payart, the French chargé d'affaires, to convey urgently to the French Government that in the event of an attack by Germany on Czechoslovakia the Soviet Government would fulfil its obligations under the Soviet-Czechoslovak pact of mutual assistance and give armed assistance. Under the conditions of that pact Soviet aid was only obligatory if France at the same time took up arms against Germany. Consequently the Soviet Government wanted to know what were the intentions of the French Government. The Soviet Government proposed to call an immediate meeting of representatives of the Soviet, French and Czechoslovak general staffs to work out necessary measures.

Litvinov believed that Romania would allow Soviet troops and aircraft to cross her territory, but considered that to bring influence to bear to this end it was desirable to raise the question of eventual help to Czechoslovakia in the League of Nations as soon as possible.

The Soviet declaration brought a note of firmness, farsightedness and courage into the atmosphere of cowardly confusion prevailing in the West. It was vital that it became known as widely as possible, for the Cliveden set had throughout August been engaged in a whispering campaign in political circles which boiled down to this: 'We should be glad to come to the rescue of Czechoslovakia, but without Russia this is difficult to accomplish, and Russia keeps silence and is clearly reluctant to fulfil her obligations under the Soviet-Czechoslovak Mutual Aid Pact.'

I did not have instructions to publish the contents of the Litvinov-Payart talk, but the form of the communication did not exlcude the spreading of information about it.

On the same day I told Churchill about this step of the Soviet Government and he said he would bring it to the notice of Halifax. Churchill confirms in the first volume of his war memoirs that he sent Halifax a letter straight away in which he informed the Foreign Secretary about the talk in Moscow. The next day I repeated to Lloyd George and deputy Labour leader Arthur Greenwood what I had told Churchill. If any member of the British Government got the idea of distorting the position of the USSR, in parliament or outside, and falsely accusing it of 'passivity on the Czechoslovak

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question', there could be a reply from the Opposition that would restore the truth. That is what in fact happened.

On September 8, Halifax invited me to see him and asked whether I was going to Geneva for the opening of the League of Nations Assembly on September 12. Hearing that I was, he asked me to convey to Litvinov his regret that he would not be able to meet him, as urgent matters kept him in London. This, however, was only an excuse for our meeting, for Halifax immediately began to question me in detail about the talks between Litvinov and Payart. I gave him the details. This meant that the British Government had all the necessary information about the steps taken by the Soviet Government.

At about the same time I met the French Ambassador, Corbin, in London and was astounded to find he knew nothing about Litvinov's talk with Payart. What could it mean? I got the answer only later in Geneva.

When the League of Nations Assembly opened on September 12 the atmosphere was explosive. The Nazi Party rally was being held in Nuremberg and its sinister echoes were audible in all corners of Europe. On the evening of September 12 Hitler was to make a major speech at Nuremberg which was expected to decide whether there would be war or not. An entry in my diary for September 25 recalls a talk with Litvinov who asked me:

> What do you think, will there be war or won't there? Yesterday we exchanged opinions: I consider that the British and French will give way again and there won't be war; Yakov Zakharovich (Suritz, the Ambassador in Paris) agreed with me. Boris Yefimovich (Stein, the Ambassador in Italy) took the opposite view. What do you say?

At that moment Stein burst in and began to demonstrate that the Czechs would reject the ultimatum, that the British and French would not be able to put pressure on them, that the Germans would go on to the offensive, the French would be forced to support the Czechs and events would continue to snowball. . . . There is this entry in my diary:

> Stein's reasoning seemed to be logically incontrovertible, but deep in my heart a voice asserted: 'Will Chamberlain and Daladier stand firm when it is essential to say straight out—War! I don't think they will.' I replied to Litvinov: 'Knowing "my" British I am inclined to agree with you. However, there are some incalculable factors which could play a tremendous role—for example the behaviour of the Czechs at the moment of danger.'

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BOOK REVIEW :

Georg Lukács: Political Writings, 1919-1929

Edited by Rodney Livingstone
NLB, 258 pp., £3.75

LUKACS'S CLAIM on our attention hitherto has been his contribution in the field of aesthetics and the novel. These political writings add another dimension to his intellectual stature. They are political writings covering a decade, highly scholarly essays, alas, edited by an academic for academics, with little time to waste on the difficulties of non-academics.

The work might have served a very valuable purpose: to illuminate the events of the Hungarian revolution of 1919 with an introduction which set out the prevailing situation, the political line of the Party, *vis-à-vis* that of Lukács himself, and, while this would plainly have been to raise sharp controversies about the correctness of the postures taken up, this in itself would have been no bad matter.

These may seen cavilling criticisms: certainly we are glad to have 'Tactics and Ethics' and 'The Question of Parliamentarianism' available. The 'Blum Theses', while valuable, will only be grasped as a document, whether we accept it or not, when it is seen against the criticism to which it gave rise in Party circles.

The writings on Lassalle, and especially on Moses Hesse, and the 'True Socialists', who are immortalised like flies in amber in the 'Communist Manifesto' of 1847, give rise to more philosophical and abstruse argumentation, and the reader, left to work through this material without benefit of philosophical mentor to accompany him, may well be lost. Not everyone is knowledgeable about Hegel and about Fichte.

'The Question of Parliamentarianism', which we learn was written before Lenin's *Left Wing Communism*, inevitably came under the strictures of Lenin: and the quotation from Lenin's criticism, given in the editor's introduction, helps to grasp the limitation of Lukács.

The book will fill a need. But if the editor will take a less donnish look at his responsibilities a second edition can begin to satisfy the appetite for more information which this edition makes glaringly manifest is in existence.

BEN AINLEY

PUBLICATIONS RECEIVED

Imperialism Today, Gus Hall. International Publishers (Central Books), 384 pp., £2.

Soviet Planning: Principles and Techniques, edited by Y. Shvyrkov. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 194 pp., 50p.

Humanism, Its Philosophical, Ethical and Sociological Aspects, M. Petrosyan. Progress Publishers (Central Books), 308 pp., 75p.

Dictionary of Labour Biography, Vol. I, Joyce M. Bellamy and John Saville. Macmillan, 388 pp., £10.

USSR 72: Novosti Press Agency Year Book. Novosti, 336 pp., 75p.

The Post-War History of the British Working Class, Allen Hutt. E.P. Publishing, 320 pp., £3.50.

Lessons from LSE—A Communist Perspective. LSE Branch of the Communist Party, 26 pp., 10p.

Mosebetsi—the Story of a South African Worker. South African Congress of Trade Unions, 10 pp., 10p.

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FIGHTING THE FREEZE

EACH copy of *Labour Monthly* we sell this month is sold at a loss. You, the reader, may be one of those who have begun to rally to our help to tide us over the crisis. The position is as follows.

In October our Business Committee took the decision that the increase in price, which they knew to be necessary in view of the many increases in our production costs and office bills, should await the turn of the year in order to give all our subscribers the benefit of renewal of their annual subscription at the current rate. The opportunity was also taken to encourage new readers to take out subscriptions before the end of the year.

In November the blow fell: the freeze, imposed by the Government on some goods and services (and without exception on wages but not on dividends), meant for *LM* a postponement of what was by then an already overdue infusion of our lifeblood: our sales income.

The position was explained to our readers in December, and an appeal was made for extra donations then and in January. The December response is shown below and, wonderful as it looks, the figure of £153 needs one qualification. As our regular readers will know from previous years, it is usual for our fund record to be high in February: last February's was £136. This is because most subscription renewals are received in December, and with them come annual donations from those readers. Taking into account all donations over the year, even the February peak does not bring our monthly average up to our target of £100: the average for 1972 was £80 per month.

We have, therefore, to appeal for a further effort to be made by every reader who can to send us a donation—be it even a few pence each—in response to this immediate crisis. The 'extras' sent in by our regular donors in December amounted to £8: thank you, good friends of *Labour Monthly*—the first to stand by in time of need.

Nicola Seyd

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REGULAR DONATIONS came from: 'Oliver Twist' (+ extra) £2.50, S Morrissy (+ Xmas Box) £2.50, 'Patrick' 50p, D Belenson £1, H Brindle 25p, M Morgan 25p, Southend Branch £1, Marie Philibert 75p, B and K R (USA) £2.72, W E Rounce 75p, Union of Turkish Progressives in Britain £1, K and J Kokos (+ extra) 85p, J Rink 25p, J Purton 37p, P W Ladkin 50p, T Crichton £5, A Corbett £1, Len Potter £1, Miss E Dymock 15p, L'Humanité (+ extra) 80p, R Paul 50p, C T M 50p, 'Pax' (+ extra) £1, Len and Stella Perkins 25p, W H Laithwaite £5, 'Socialist Sailor' £2, J Tarver £1, T E A Southern £3, A M T (for Fernando and Guilherme) 5p.

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LABOUR MONTHLY FIFTY YEARS AGO

A more positive school of pacifism holds the opinion that war is a bad business for every country, even those which are victorious. Norman Angell is a characteristic representative of this type, whose work, *The Great Illusion*, is well known. He bases his argument on the dependence of states, which is of such a kind that, bound by the ties of foreign commerce, credit and exchange, the fall of any one state results in considerable economic injury to the victor country. Without having recourse to any philosophic reasoning, he argues that war should be avoided, because it is a deplorable business even for the victors. It is no mere chance that England is the land of origin of this kind of pacifism, being a country most dependent on foreign economic conditions.

The basic error in the reasoning of Norman Angell—apart from the fact that he neglects to consider the reasons for the history and the part played by the warlike spirit—the basic error is in his assumption that the question of war or peace may be considered in its relation to the welfare of a country as a whole. In reality the problem of war or peace does not evoke the interest of the whole country, but merely that of small groups of big businessmen, armament manufacturers, officers and such like. And in spite of the enormous damage inflicted by the world war, it has not yet been proved that these groups did a bad business —on the contrary.

(From 'Pacifism—Old and New', by E. Varga, *Labour Monthly*, February 1923)

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